

REMARKS

In the July 17, 2007 Final Office Action, the drawings are objected to for minor informalities and claims 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(b) as being unpatentably obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,250,691 to *Taylor et al.*

By the present amendment, claim 3 is amended and claims 7-11 are added. Claims 3-6 remain pending in the application with claims 3 and 7 being the only independent claims.

The rejections over prior art are respectfully traversed. In summary, *Taylor et al.* fails to disclose, teach or suggest a quick connection device having a fastening member disposed around a circumferential protrusion so as to axially compress a sealing member. Accordingly, each objection and rejection is addressed in detail below.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to for several informalities. In response, a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets, including corrected drawing figures, is submitted herewith. Applicants believe the corrected drawings address each of the objections made in the Office Action. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentably obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,250,691 to *Taylor et al.* Amended independent claim 3 recites a quick connecting device comprising, among other elements, a female member with first and second circumferential protrusions, a male member with a circumferential groove, first and second sealing members disposed between the first and second circumferential portions, respectively,

of the female member and the outer surface of the male member, and a fastening member disposed around the female and male members so as to be in direct contact with the first circumferential protrusion in a manner that compresses the first sealing member and holds the female and male members in place. *Taylor* fails to teach a fastening member that compresses a sealing member to hold the female and male members in place.

The device of *Taylor* includes a U-shaped fastening member 46 with one of its legs 46a extending radially inwardly and into the circumferential groove 44b of the male member 44 and with its other leg 46b abutting an outer surface of the female member 40 for securing the female and male members. As demonstrated by the gap between the fastening member 46 and the circumferential protrusion 40a illustrated in FIG. 6 of *Taylor*, the fastening member 46 does not directly contact the circumferential protrusion 40a, and therefore does not directly compress the sealing member 42. In fact, any direct contact the fastening member 46 makes with the female member 40 in *Taylor* merely “butts” the female member 40 directly against the end of the male member 44 with no sealing member between them. Thus, *Taylor* does not disclose a fastening member that holds male and female members axially in place by compressing a sealing member via direct contact between a fastening member and a circumferential protrusion, but rather merely discloses a sealing member causing the female member to butt up against the male member without the fastening member compressing a sealing member.

Additionally, as acknowledged in the Office Action, *Taylor* does not disclose a female member with a second circumferential protrusion with a sealing member disposed between the female member and the outer surface of the male member. Instead, the Office Action asserts that it would have been obvious to add a second circumferential protrusion with a sealing member because “duplicating the components of a prior art device is a design consideration within the skill of the art.” As disclosed in the specification of the present

invention at page 5, lines 33-35, there is no duplication of components because one sealing member 67 is meant to be primarily a “locking” member and the other sealing member 68 is meant to be primarily a “sealing” member. The non-duplicative locking member of the present invention primarily serves to hold the male and female members axially in place, whereas the sealing member of the present invention serves to provide a satisfactory seal between the male and female members.

Accordingly, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established because all of the limitations of the present invention are not disclosed, taught or suggested or rendered obvious by *Taylor*. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Dependent claims 4-6 are also believed to be allowable over *Taylor* for the same reasons discussed above. Moreover, these claim recite additional features not found in the prior art. For example, dependent claim 5 recites that the first and second sealing members are first and second gaskets, respectively, with the first sealing member serving primarily to hold the male and female members axially in place and the second gasket serving primarily to seal the male and female members.

New Claims

New claims 7-11 are added. New independent claim 7 recites a quick connecting device comprising, among other elements, a female member with first and second circumferential protrusions; a male member with a circumferential groove with an inclined surface leading from the circumferential groove; first and second sealing members respectively disposed between the first and second circumferential portions of the female member and the outer surface of the male member, the first sealing member being located on the inclined surface of the male member; and a fastening member disposed around the female

and male members so as to be in contact with the first circumferential protrusion in a manner that compresses the first sealing member between the first circumferential protrusion of the female member and the inclined surface of the male member, thereby holding the female and male members axially in place. Nothing in *Taylor* discloses, teaches or suggests a male member having a circumferential groove from which an inclined surface extends and on which a sealing member is compressed by the female member. Instead, *Taylor* appears to disclose only a flat surface generally parallel to the male member on which a sealing member is compressed, as seen in FIG. 6. Therefore, new independent claim 7 is also believed to be allowable over *Taylor*.

New claims 8-11 depend from claim 7 and are therefore allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, these claims recite additional features not found in the prior art. For example, dependent claim 11 recites that the first circumferential protrusion has a larger diameter than the second circumferential protrusion.

In view of the foregoing, claims 3-11 are believed to be in allowable condition as amended. Prompt and favorable treatment is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any shortage of fees or credit any overpayment thereof to BLANK ROME LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (001058-00021). In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this report, Applicants hereby petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

By: Tara L. Laster
Tara L. Laster
Reg. No. 46,510
Attorney for Applicant

BLANK ROME LLP
600 New Hampshire Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20037
Telephone: (202) 772-5800
Facsimile: (202) 772-5858

Date: November 19, 2007